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Interviewer: Larry Massie

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Larry Dr. Mitchell, this project, as I think my wife Priscilla explained to you, is geared toward documenting John Fetzer's spiritual search—which was all throughout his life.

EM Yes, I know.

Larry I know you were very much an important part of that. I wonder if we could begin by you telling me a little bit about your early background because I'm interested in knowing.

EM My personal background.

Larry Your personal background, because it seems to me like you were prepared to do something unusual in space; I'd like to know about your upbringing.

EM Okay. I present this in a PowerPoint to some of my lectures, but, very simply, I was born in Texas, the panhandle of Texas, in 1930. My family had just lost everything during the Depression. At that point, they were farming. My grandfather and his three sons were working a wheat farm in the panhandle of Texas near Hereford, Texas, and the banks repossessed all of that during the—

Larry The Depression, the Dust Bowl?

EM Yes, uh-hmm. My grandfather took his three sons - there are two sons left, one passed away - to work on the Santa Fe Railroad, driving spikes, building Santa Fe Railroad through that area for a time, to get the family fed and housed. This is a true story: He saved up enough money, the family saved up enough money to buy him a \$9 heifer calf. That put him back in the cattle trade business, because fundamentally he was a cattle trader.

Larry I see.

EM After he and my grandmother were married and the boys were just babies, from trading and raising cattle in the area down near El Paso in the Rio Grande, they were down at a cow camp. I'm sure my grandmother had said of the business, Joe,

we gotta get these kids back to civilization and get them to school. So they moved back to the panhandle near Hereford, and ran a farm until they lost it in the Depression. Then they went into the cattle business with this \$9 heifer calf.

Larry Just one.

EM He was a real cattle trader. In a period of three years he traded that \$9 heifer calf into a herd of 250 cows.

Larry Wow, he was good!

EM Took them to market, sold them off, and that put the family back in the cattle business. It so happens that where the best cattle trading was going on at that time was Roswell, New Mexico; and he moved his family to Roswell, New Mexico, in the Pecos Valley. My grandfather then established himself as a bull trader. He would go back to the breeding farms in Iowa, buy young white-faced registered bulls, and bring them back to the West to sell them to ranchers as herd bulls, replacing the longhorn that had been the standard range of cattle. The Herefords were—

Larry More meat.

EM More meat, better meat. My grandfather built up his business as cattle trader very successfully and he was supplying bulls as far West as Tucson, Arizona, from Roswell, New Mexico. Of course, he would trade a rancher a bull in return for some of the cattle, the cows and calves that were feeders; he'd bring them in and feed them up, then send them off to the market. They also started a farm machinery dealership. My father and my uncle were running the farm and the farm machinery dealership for my grandpa, who was out trading bulls and cows. That was all in the Pecos Valley around Roswell, New Mexico.

I grew up on a farm, on a ranch, and with cattle. Then when we got our second farm machinery dealership, in Artesia, New Mexico, which was about 30 miles down the road from Roswell. My father moved us down, and he took charge of establishing that farm machinery business. And we had a ranch in between that we all worked on.

Larry Was your family religious?

EM Okay, yes. I'm going to get to that. My mother and my grandmother were Baptists, Southern Baptists, and my father, well, my father was a Mason.

Larry Oh, he was, okay.

EM Master of the Lodge in Artesia. I became DeMolay and went to the DeMolay organization.

Larry DeMolay?

EM DeMolay is the youth part of the Masonic Order, so it's spiritual. Let's call it spiritual as is the Masonic Order, but not hardcore religious in the sense of either Catholic, Baptist, or whatever. I would say my family, particularly my mother and my grandmother, were very spiritual women. We attended the Baptist Church, Southern Baptist Church, throughout my young life until I started studying philosophy.

Larry In high school?

EM Yes, I started studying philosophy in high school, but I'm getting a little ahead of myself. One of our ranches in New Mexico was very near Roswell Air Force Base, which had been established right during World War II. It so happened we were right across the mountain from the White Sands proving ground, where the first atomic weapons were tested that led to Hiroshima. We could see the flashes of light from bomb tests over there.

Larry You had no idea it was atomic though, did you?

EM We didn't know. Well, the word—

Larry Were there rumors?

EM There were rumors, but there wasn't any solid knowledge until after Hiroshima, after World War II. The reason I bring that up is, I got interested in flying and went out to the Artesian Municipal Airport when I was in high school with one of my buddies, high school buddies, and we washed airplanes to earn flight time. I got my pilot's license by the time I was 16 and still in high school.

Larry With prop planes.

EM With prop planes. Jets weren't even there. They had been invented and were starting to fly, but they weren't around then. What spurred that interest was: when I four years old and we were in this in-between after they'd lost the farms, my dad was sharecropping a farm near Blackwell, Texas, that belonged to his aunt, my grandfather's sister. They hadn't lost their farms and they were pretty wealthy farm people.

She had a farm near Blackwell, Texas, that my father took us down to. He was sharecropping that farm for a couple of years while we were getting back on our feet. The story is that one day, a World War I barnstormer landed in our field because he was running short of gas, and Dad took some gas cans and went into Blackwell, brought him back some gas, and the man gave us a reward. He let me ride in my father's lap and we did a circle around the field with the man.

Larry Was it a biplane?

EM It was a biplane. It was an old Curtiss training plane. That was my first taste of aviation. During World War II, the Roswell Air Force Base was there and the training pattern, or the flight pattern, was over one of our farms.

Larry So you saw a lot of aircraft.

EM So I saw a lot of aircraft and that intrigued me. That was when I was in high school with a buddy of mine, we went out to the local airport and washed airplanes to earn flight time. I washed enough airplanes to earn enough flight time to solo and then get my license. In those days it was much easier to get a pilot's license. I had my pilot's license by the time I was 16, and went off at 17 back to the East to school, at Carnegie Tech.

Larry When you were 17—so that brings us to 1947.

EM '47, '48.

Larry Were you out there at Roswell when those events happened?

EM I was in Artesia when the events happened. Since my grandfather virtually knew everyone in the Pecos Valley, there weren't that many people, 50,000 people in that whole valley from Carlsbad to Roswell and up to Pecos Valley. He knew Brazel, the manager of the ranch where the so-called UFO crashed. One of the officers at Roswell Air Force Base was a friend of ours. He was a major. He wasn't in the same office, but he was in the same building with Jesse Marcel, who was the administrative officer that went out to that crash site. I got it later on. This is after the fact. At the time of the Roswell crash, I was too busy getting ready to go to college. One day the Roswell Daily Record gives the crash of an alien spacecraft.

Larry It said that, did it?

EM The first day. The second day—

Larry Nothing.

EM It came out and said no, it just a weather balloon. The Air Force had changed their story; the general and headquarters, I think, near Wichita Falls, Texas, had gone back to Washington. They'd changed their story and started denying it about the second day. So I dismissed it in my mind.

Larry In your mind. You started to tell me that you got interested in philosophy?

EM That happened as I started to go off to college.

Larry Did you lose your faith in the organized religion?

EM Not lose my faith. Let me continue the story as it happened, and I'll get to that point. I didn't really start getting interested in philosophy and cosmology until after I was getting ready to go to the moon. Let me progress up to there. After the Roswell incident and the second - in fact, I think I have in my papers here somewhere the Roswell Daily Record—

Larry The first issue?

EM The first issue, and then the second issue. As soon as it was announced as a weather balloon, at 17, I just forgot all about it; I was going off to college and I couldn't care less at that point. So, I did, I went off to college and graduated from Carnegie Tech then, Carnegie Mellon now, in 1952. I finished in December of '51 and had worked my way through college, the last few years, working the steel mills in Bethlehem Steel Mills. I married my college sweetheart, Louise, in December of 1951. I'd finished my academic work, but graduation wasn't really until June of '52, and she had some more classes to take.

I went back to work with my dad. My dad wanted me to come back and work with him, running the family business because well, tough times. And my grandfather was sick, and he wanted me to come back and help manage the whole damn place. What we had at that point was a range, two farms, and two farm machinery dealerships.

Larry That kept him busy?

EM It kept him busy. I got my first degree in Industrial Management. I was going to go to work in an industrial plant in the East, but Dad wanted me to come back and give him a hand while all of this was going on with Granddad sick. Louise and I got married, and then I went back to help Dad at the ranch. Then before '52 was over, by the fall of '52, the draft was on, the Korean War was on. The draft was on and the draft board said, we want you, and I said, you don't want me. I'll serve my country, but I'm going to fly. I'm going to fly. If I'm going to come in, I'm going to fly. However, Louise and I had gotten married. Now remember, at that point the Air Force was formed, the Army Air Corps became the U.S. Air Force and separated from the Army as a different branch of service. Neither the Air Force nor the Navy flight program would put people through flight school if they were married. You had to be a bachelor and young. Of course, I was only 22 at that point, but nevertheless I was married, and so I couldn't go to normal flight school as a flight cadet. The way I got around that was I enlisted in the Navy, went to San Diego to Navy boot camp, became a Navy seaman. Then my grades and everything were good enough, they sent me off to officer school at Newport. I got my commission as an ensign at Newport the following spring in '53, and then applied for flight school. Louise and I went down to Pensacola, and that's

where our first daughter was born. She was pregnant with our first daughter. I went through Navy flight school in '53.

Larry You'd figured out as an alternative way to do that.

EM I knew what I wanted, and if I was going to go, I was going to fly. I wanted to fly, and it was easier to do it with the Navy than with the Air Force. The rules were less, so that's the way I ended up doing that; I became a Naval officer. Then we went overseas, the first time to Okinawa for the first tour of duty with the Navy and a patrol squadron; but we came back from that tour of duty and the squadron was switched to a heavy attack squadron with jet aircraft. I got jet training at that point; when I went back, the Korean War ended in '53. But I had obligated service to pay for all of this training and my commission. So, I was still aboard; —I went back to sea aboard an aircraft carrier with A3 aircraft, jet aircraft.

Larry That was early on for that, wasn't it?

EM Yes, the A3 was the first jet heavy attack aircraft aboard carriers in the Pacific, and our squadron had those. But getting on to the story here, I was coming back from my second tour of sea duty with the Navy, aboard the aircraft carrier Ticonderoga, and I'd had two tours of duty in an aircraft, and I was coming back to test pilot school because I was a pretty good pilot.

I was coming back to shore duty as a test pilot on a particular date, October 4, 1957, and that was the day Sputnik landed. I knew that, aboard ship. It came across the news, and I said, Oh, my God, history has just shifted directions. And I realized I wanted to be a part of that. I was coming back to test pilot duty, and I came back to China Lake, California, as the Navy test facility out there where I was doing some work with the A3 because I was a well qualified A3 pilot.

They were just starting to select astronauts, the first astronauts: Alan Shepard, Deke Slater and those guys, and they were all about four or five years older than me and already had their test pilot experience. I realized I was going to have to catch up with them if I was going to be an astronaut and be part of that. I did a couple of years of duty as a test pilot out of China Lake, California, but then to catch up with them I applied to go back to school. And I went to Naval postgraduate school, and then on to MIT to get a doctorate. That was really the beginning of getting to where you were—

Larry Did you know those early astronauts?

EM Not at the time. I met them later.

Larry I was just wondering if you knew Roger Chaffee.

EM I did know him at one point.

Larry He was from Grand Rapids, you know.

EM Right. I did not meet him until after I got to the astronaut program, but I did know him after I got there. I didn't know any of them when I was at China Lake. They hadn't been selected when I was at China Lake. That was just in the first process, and Chaffee wasn't in the initial selection. He was about the second or third group of astronauts.

You were talking philosophy. I did not really start looking into philosophy—I was very well read in my religions, but when I went back to get my doctorate at MIT, I was attending the First Baptist Church in the west side of Boston, suburb of Boston, the Baptist church there, a Northern Baptist church as opposed to a Southern Baptist church.

Larry A little different, weren't they?

EM A little different. I got very close to the pastor; he was a philosopher and a thinker, and so I got close to him. I would say at that point I started to learn more about philosophy and spirituality, as opposed to hardcore religion. I started drifting more toward cosmology and—

Larry The esoteric type thinking.

EM Yes. Thanks to Jim Reynolds, the pastor, a young fella, but a very, very astute, very good pastor. He was also a thinker and rooted in his philosophy, religious philosophy and spirituality. We became very good, very close friends. That continued with me all the way. I did become interested after I went on to NASA and after I graduated from MIT. To tie it together, I was headed to go to NASA from getting my doctorate at MIT but got sidetracked and sent to Los Angeles to the Manned Orbiting Laboratory Program, which was the military space program. That was an ill-fated program and didn't last very long, but that was the military effort to have their own space program.

Larry Kind of redundant, wasn't it?

EM They were more interested, of course, in observation and military applications. Their objective here was an intelligence function in space, an orbiting laboratory to develop weaponry and develop strategy for space weapon. I was sent there by the Pentagon as technical director for the Navy representation in the Manned Orbiting Laboratory, instead of getting to go to Houston, to NASA, where I wanted to go. That lasted for about a year and a half, and then the MOL program started to come apart.

I was pretty well situated there in that, and when it started to come apart I talked to my boss who had gotten me out there in the first place. He was a Navy captain

and he was head of the office, but I was his technical director for all that. I said I'd like to go out to Edwards Air Force Base because that's where all the astronauts are being selected from. He helped me get out to Edwards Air Force Base, and that was in 1965. I went to Edwards Air Force Base. As a matter of fact, come on, I'll show you. Over there is a book of students and instructors. I have a picture here I wanted to show you. I thought it was right here with all this other stuff from Edwards Air Force Base taken in 1966, the year after I got there. The five of us right there were all selected as astronauts from Edwards Air Force Base in 1966.

Larry Boy, that's early, isn't it?

EM There's Fred Hayes from Apollo 13, myself, Charlie Duke, Apollo 16, Al Worden, Apollo 15, Joe Engle who didn't fly on Apollo. He flew in Sky Lab. Here we're standing in front of an F-104, and we were all selected in early 1966 to the Apollo program. That's the story going out to Edwards, the MOL, Manned Orbiting Lab Program collapsed. Several of the MOL astronauts then came back through Edwards, and subsequently several of them came onto NASA after us.

Larry So it was '71 when you went on that first mission, right?

EM Uh-hmm.

Larry So by that time, you had started to embrace some different ways of thinking.

EM Yes. Okay, let me get to that. About the time I went off to NASA, because I'm a curious guy, thanks to Jim Reynolds, I got expanding in the whole notion of broadening my concept of religion as more of a philosophy.

Larry And some of the Eastern religions?

EM That did come, after I came back from space. But what happened that got me going before I went into space was with Jim; and he was Northern Baptist as opposed to the rigidity of Southern Baptist. Louise, my wife, we were married in a Methodist church, so I've been exposed. One of my girlfriends, high school girlfriends, was Presbyterian. I was started to be exposed to various Christian religions, and was starting to ask myself the question: What's the difference here, what are we talking about? That kind of opened me up, it was starting to open me up to a broader perspective than just a narrow discipline. Then about that time, right after I went to NASA, I stumbled across the work of Joseph B. Rhine. Do you know who Joe Rhine, J. B. Rhine was? He was a foremost, a very foremost parapsychologist in those days. I stumbled across his work and started studying up on it. What I was thinking at that point was, if this guy is correct on parapsychology and the mind over matter kind of phenomenon, then we in science have a hell of a lot to learn. We don't have that down very well at all. My interest in parapsychology started growing there about the same time, as I was at

the MOL and at Edwards and getting into NASA. I was just beginning to start at that point; I became interested and I was reading everything I could get my hands on in parapsychology. Somehow my interest, well, it got out there. But then, as I think you know, after I was selected to go into space, I had a several good friends I'd met who were in the space program who were interested in parapsychology as well. They said, Well, Edgar, if you're going to go into space, why don't we do an ESP experiment in space and see if anything works? I said, My God, that's a good idea. So that was when we set up—

Larry With the cards?

EM I'm getting a little ahead of my story here, but that was when we set up the experiment to do it in space, and then carry out the experiment.

Larry With the cards.

EM With the cards

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Larry Remote—

EM I didn't have the cards in space, but what I did was I set it up. I've got it all in a file in here and it's all destined to go to Noetics, of course. But I set it up as rows and columns on a knee board sheet that I could carry on my knee board and randomized—instead of using cards I randomized the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 corresponding to star, cross, wavy line, circle, and square on the Zener cards. I just used a knee board, as opposed to an actual deck of cards, but the same statistically. I was supposed to do that six times in space. I only did it four because that's all the time I had, but I would just randomly assign 1, 2, 3—on any given day 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to star, cross, wavy line, circle, and square and write down my assignments, so it was totally random. The guys on earth that were doing the guessing, they guessed six times and I only did it four times, but the mathematics of that could be corrected out real fine; the whole point was that when we brought all that back, I sent it off to J. B. Rhine and Karlis Osis. You know those names?

Larry I know Rhine.

EM Osis was a New York parapsychologist, very competent, too. I sent the results off to them, to both of those, and to check my results and check what we had gained. And, long story short, the first check of using six results was that chance could've produced our results 1 out of 3,000 experiments, not bad. But if we narrowed it down to the four times that I did it, instead of the six times they thought I did it, it was 1 in 12,000 - a virtually, absolutely powerful experimental result. So that was that story.

Larry Tell me about your epiphany.

EM Okay. The epiphany resulted on the way back. My responsibility was the lunar module. I was a lunar module pilot, which meant I had to know it like the back of my hand. Part of the story I didn't fill you in on yet was that Fred Hayes and I were sent to Grumman aircraft factory, when we first went into the Apollo program. We had to select a technical specialty, what did we want to do, and Fred and I both chose to work on the lunar module. We went to Grumman, we were sent to a Grumman aircraft factory as the Apollo astronauts representing the NASA space program, the astronaut program, for the building of the lunar module. We participated in all the tests, building up to the first flight of the lunar module on Apollo 9. With that event, we had done all the tests on the building of the lunar module, and the lunar module for Apollo 9 was sent to Cape Kennedy for a flight test. Then Fred and I were free to enter the crew cycle. I went to back-up crew on Apollo 10. He went to back-up crew on Apollo 11. According to our rotation scheme at that time, that meant we would be eligible for a prime crew slot three flights later. So that made me eligible for Apollo 13 and for Apollo 14. Did you see the Apollo 13 movie?

Larry No, I didn't.

EM Okay, well the Apollo 13 movie was a very good depiction.

Larry I'll have to look at it.

EM Yes, it's available. But the point was, I should've been on Apollo 13. However, I served on Apollo 10 as back-up with Gordon Cooper, and he wanted to retire after that, so he retired from the program. Alan Shepard who had been grounded with an inner ear program, they call it Meniere's syndrome - he got that repaired and came back on flight status and wanted to take Gordon's place, which would have meant we would've been Apollo 13. Jim Lovell and Fred Hayes would've been Apollo 14. But headquarters said, Alan, you haven't been in the training for some time. It's best you take a little more training time. You and Jim Lovell and your crews shift positions. You guys take 14 and let them take 13. We didn't want to do that, but the boss said so, so we weren't going to argue. We shifted to 14, they shifted to 13.

Ken Mattingly, who was a very close to Fred and me, was command module pilot on Apollo 13 now. He got bumped because he'd been exposed to the measles with Charlie Duke's kids, so he didn't get to go. That left Ken Mattingly and myself on the ground during Apollo 13, as the two most senior lunar module and command module pilots on the ground for that event. We spent all the time after their explosion in space, all the time in the simulators doing what they needed to do—me in the lunar module simulator, Ken in the command module simulator—figuring out how to get them back through; with no power in the command module, me figuring out how that was going to work with all the burns, and the lunar module as the lifeboat bringing them back home. That's long-story-short of that whole bit.

Now, to get to your question about my epiphany in space. The background was, I was pretty high up on the list of lunar module pilots. There wasn't anybody who knew it better than I did. Alan Shepard, some of the older guys were saying, why did you pick Mitchell to go as your lunar module pilot? And his response was, Because I wanted to come home. He paid me a pretty good compliment. But once we had finished all our work on the lunar surface and were coming home, essentially most of my technical work was completed.

There was still work to do, of course, and I was still systems engineer on a well-functioning spacecraft. There were still experiments to do: Stu Roosa was doing them, Alan was doing them, and I was there. But they were primary in bringing us home, and I got to look out the window. This is the way it was set up. My major responsibilities as lunar module pilot were largely complete. I was responsible for the surface work and the lunar module, and all that was done. I was just riding home in the right seat, coming home. And we were set up.

We were flying perpendicular to the ecliptic. The ecliptic is a plane that contains the earth, the moon, and the sun, but we were perpendicular, so we were flying sideways and rotating to keep thermal balance on the spacecraft; so we were flying like this. In space it doesn't matter. You don't have to be like an airplane that way. What that caused to happen is, every two minutes a 360 panorama of the heavens including the earth, the moon, and the sun came and appeared in the cockpit window, the spacecraft window. And that's, wow.

This is getting back to your question about spirituality and religion. I suddenly realized from my Ph.D. training in cosmology and star systems at MIT and Harvard (I did a lot of work at Harvard), that all the matter in our universe is created in star systems. The stars are the furnaces that create matter. Essentially our physical bodies were stardust. As I watched this from the heavens looking at it, I was overwhelmed with it. My God, the molecules in my body and the molecules in my partner's bodies and the molecules in the spacecraft, if not manufactured were at least prototyped in some ancient generation of stars, were stardust. Which means that, since science at that point in history still hadn't to a large degree four years ago, was still not accepting consciousness as a fundamental aspect of the nature of the universe.

Larry What do you mean by consciousness?

EM What do you mean by consciousness?

Larry Well, the ordinary meaning of consciousness is that you're awake and you're thinking.

EM Okay. Let's build on that. If you go to Webster's Unabridged, consciousness at its most fundamental level means awareness, it means awareness. Let's say that's a

good start. Consciousness begins with awareness; but it also implies, in beings like ourselves, the ability to think. The evidence starts to show - Do you know study any of Cleve Backster's work? Cleve Backster ran lie detector tests 35, 40 years ago on people, but he got very interested in this whole question of what perception is in nature. We started studying plants, putting electrodes on plants. And he found – Do you know what a Faraday cage is?

Larry Yes.

EM A Faraday cage isolates electromagnetic signals. He started putting plants inside of it. He first discovered that if you put electrodes on them and you threaten or burn a plant over here, you'd get a reaction to a plant over here. Then he went and put his plants inside a Faraday cage and found out if you burned a plant out here, they still reacted inside the Faraday cage; so there was a connection here going on. If we say consciousness has to do with awareness, these plants were aware of one another.

Larry So, by consciousness you mean then the unity of—

EM I'm getting there. Back in those days, this was in the late 60's when Backster was doing his work, there was a whole notion of the 'green thumb'; if you treated your plants nicely, they prospered better than if you didn't. That means there was an awareness between some sort of good and evil, lovingness or mal-intent. That was implied by this Cleve Backster work that was going on. Getting into science here, if you start to take — I think I better back up and give you a background here, before I go on with the story. All of this comes about because 400 years ago the philosopher René Descartes - Do you know about René Descartes?

Larry Uh-hmm.

EM René Descartes, a prince of the church, wrote a paper that said, Body, mind, physicality, spirituality belonged to different realms of reality that don't interact. That served the noble purpose that it got the Spanish Inquisition at the time off the backs of the intellectuals, so they quit burning them at the stake. Copernicus had the good sense to die before he got published. But it kept them from burning people at the stake for disagreeing with the church, as long as they stayed away from mind and consciousness and the interaction between the two.

That persisted for 400 years, until the end of the 19th century when Max Planck discovered black body radiation; then Einstein and the early 20th century physicists came up with quantum mechanics, which showed that Descartes was wrong, that the body and mind do interact. However, parapsychology was still not accepted for most of the 20th century, even though quantum mechanics clearly showed a mind-body interaction. It was only when Noetics and others,

near the end of the 20th century, started causing parapsychology, that's when it was set to be realized that it's valid, and that started to change the whole picture.

Larry It seems like it's such a simple concept. Scientists accept psychosomatic illnesses.

EM Tell me about it. But the whole point is dogma. Just like religious dogma, scientific dogma - paradigms don't change easily, and the Cartesian duality rooted in science for 400 years: It has taken us virtually a century to change it. That is because many scientists were rooted in their religion, and religions don't change their paradigms very well either. That is what we have been wrestling with for the last 40 years here, since I went to the moon.

Larry So this epiphany caused you to realize that there is a conscious connection between—

EM Yes, well I didn't quit telling the story there. The answer was, yes. As I watched this I said, Oh, my God, our bodies, our minds - our bodies were manufactured in star systems; and it's likely that the story of ourselves as told by science is incomplete and flawed, and the story of ourselves as told by religion is archaic and flawed, and that the thing we have to do now, as modern scientists, is to correct that cosmological story, of How the hell did we get here? Where did this all come from? How did it happen? What is the beginning? So that's been my quest since coming back. Once I came back - oh, and that experience was accompanied with ecstasy. I mean, this was wow, this was wild stuff, and it happened all the way coming home, whenever I had a chance to quit work, look out the window, and watch this happen.

Larry Did you discuss it with your other astronauts?

EM Let me finish. I came home, I wanted an answer. I started digging through the science literature, and psychology, to see if I could find an answer to what I was experiencing. Nothing. I started digging through the religious literature. Nothing. I went to Rice University, outside of Houston and appealed to some anthropologists and archeologists there. I said, help me understand this experience. I told them this story. They came back to me a few weeks later.

There was nothing I could find in the classic literature, but they came back to me and said, yes, we think we found something in the Sanskrit of ancient India. I said, what is it? They said, it's called Savikalpa Samadhi. Well, what is Savikalpa Samadhi? They said, that's where you see things as you see them with your eyes, but it's accompanied by ecstasy and a change of mind, the fundamental change of mind, about the nature of reality. I said okay, you've just described what happened. What I described was in the Sanskrit, so I started digging through other traditions. As long as you go back to Greek, it's called—what's the Greek word? It'll pop to me in a minute. And Tibetan—I'm sorry, blocking the words.

Larry That's okay.

EM In Zen Buddhism it's called Satori, enlightened. Why am I blocking on the Greek word?

Larry But it's common to many—

EM It's common to virtually all classical traditions, that there is an expression, a name for this change of mind that comes with what I call the "big picture effect": A sudden shift due to a wow, knock-down experience, that sort of thing. It became my belief that virtually all our religious traditions are rooted in such a type of experience by some of the great mystics and leaders of ancient times.

Larry So you coined the word Noetics?

EM The word noetic—I didn't coin it. It comes out of the Greek word nous, meaning mind. John White, who helped me write my first book, *Psychic Exploration*, did the basic research and came up with these alternatives; I said, John, help me find a name for what we're doing. With all our digging, we had a conference and we said that noetic was the word we wanted to use, because it applied to mind and transformation of mind.

Larry At what point did you begin lecturing about this?

EM What we've missed here is, I started working in the beginning with Uri Geller. Because the fellow that discovered Uri Geller, and I'm blocking out his name right now but it'll pop up in a minute, found him in Israel, read about my experiment in space.

Larry Now where would this have been written?

EM One of the people that was working with me on my ESP experiment in space was a psychic in Chicago. One of my colleagues had helped find him, and he was supposed to be quiet about it and not talk about it, but he blabbed and it was published in a Chicago paper right after I got back from the moon that we had done the—

Larry Experiment.

EM It's all written down. I've got it all written down, but I'm blocking out names. Anyhow, Andrija Puharich was a medical doctor, psychologist, and researcher like myself who was interested in parapsychology; he had gone to Israel, discovered Uri Geller as a young man who could do these amazing things, mind over matter effects of all sorts, and he called me from Israel right after I got back and heard about what I was doing. He said, Dr. Mitchell, I have found one of the most powerful psychics I've ever run into in Israel. I'm going to bring him to the

States. Would you be interested in doing experiments with him to help us understand this? I said, Bring him on. We'll find out. Andrija brought him to Ossining, New York, his basic home, and I went up and spent a week with Uri.

Larry You had already retired from the service at this time?

EM I retired from the service at this point. I retired shortly after Apollo 17, because I wouldn't get to fly again until the shuttle flew, and I didn't want to wait ten years. So then I started doing experiments with Uri. Do you know Judy Skutch?

Larry Yes.

EM I met Judy about that time. Some of the other early—

Larry You met her at Columbia?

EM Met her in New York, and that whole group of people that helped me form Noetics early in the game. We brought Uri Geller out to SRI [Stanford Research Institute] and started doing the experiments.

Larry Now Judy was on your board of Noetics.

EM We hadn't formed Noetics at that point. She was just a person interested. Noetics had not been formed.

Larry This is '72, say?

EM Yes, this was '72. Noetics, we had the conference to form Noetics in December of '72, opened the doors in '73. We had been doing work with Uri at SRI during the latter part of '72, and that's where I met John.

Larry Could you tell me, maybe I'm wrong, but were you giving a series of lectures?

EM I was giving a lecture here and there occasionally.

Larry How do you think John found out about you?

EM I think he must've found out about by this releasing the info in Chicago, and then it kind of got in the newspapers elsewhere.

Larry He sought you out then?

EM Yes. I was still in Houston, and apparently I think he was interested in that; he got in touch with me and invited me to come up and sit in a box with him for a Tigers baseball game. He flew my wife Louise and I up to Detroit and we went to a ball game. We talked about all this. He was very interested. Then, a bit later when

we'd decided to form an institute to investigate all of this, I got back in touch with him and asked him if he would sit on the board.

Larry So Judy didn't introduce you.

EM I can't remember when. I don't know whether she knew John at that point or not. I think Judy met him through me.

Larry That's what I think. At one of the Noetics meetings, John came aboard your board, right?

EM Correct. I stayed in the San Francisco area at SRI in Palo Alto; we had work there until the spring of '75, when I was running out of money and I didn't have a job. I had kids to put through college. I was looking for a job. When I was talking to people, I had a potential job with Reynolds Tobacco, but I really wasn't interested in doing that. So yes, I was offered a job here in Florida, at National Inquirer. Who is the founder of the National Enquirer? (Ed. Note: Generoso Pope?)

Larry I don't know.

EM I've got his name, but it'll pop back into me pretty soon. He got in touch with me and offered me a job; it was the only job offer I had that I thought I could accept. Louise and I had split by that time, because of family propriety. I thought I was doing my wife a disservice here, going to the moon, getting interested in parapsychology, when she was a very strict psychologist; my rationale was I'd heard it a thousand times if I'd heard it once: Why didn't I marry a 9 to 5 shoe clerk? What am I doing for this woman? I said, Louise, I'm not doing you any favors being married to you.

Larry Well, you know—

EM Just to finish, I cannot think of his name, the founder of the National Enquirer was right here in Florida. The reason I had split, I started dating Anita, my second wife, and she was from here in Florida; she had connections here in Florida, so we just decided to move here if I would accept the job.

Larry What were you doing for National Enquirer?

EM Well, that was it. I didn't know what he wanted me to do. He was interested in parapsychology with psychic exploration. My book, Psychic Exploration, I had out by that time.

Larry Okay. Do you suppose John got a hold of that book, too?

EM I'm sure he did. I'm sure I gave it to him. In fact, all of my records at that point. I gave him a copy of the book, and John's wife, who was there at the beginning of Noetics also, helped me edit it.

Larry Can you remember any conversations you had with John early on about paranormal?

EM Oh, a lot of things. We even had board meetings here, after I moved here.

Larry You had them right here at this house?

EM Not in this house, no, in Palm Beach. I know the very thing that drove a wedge between John and I, not from my point of view but from his point of view, was at a board meeting here in Palm Beach. All the board would come here, after I'd left California to get a job here. John asked me at a board meeting, he said, "Edgar, I'd like you to start doing research on surviving consciousness after death." I said, "John, I would love to do that, but first I've got to find out what consciousness is, because we don't know from a science point of view." He didn't like that answer.

Larry He didn't?

EM Not worth a damn. He felt we knew enough about it that we could go do it, and I still don't know enough about it. I don't know how to design it yet. We're trying to design an experiment to show survival of consciousness.

Larry Yes, he was very interested in that.

EM Of course, he was. I know he was. Now let me tell you. Let me jump ahead in the story here. It was 1994, '95, 15 years, one of my colleagues, now a colleague in my Quantrek organization - Do you know about Quantrek?

Larry No, I don't.

EM Well, that is a recent foundation I set up to carry on from Noetics, but more in the hard sciences, physics, chemistry, neurology, biology, and so forth. One of my colleagues in Europe, Professor Walter Schempp, discovered something called a quantum hologram, which is a very, very powerful discovery. (It so happens that Walter is a descendent of Kepler, several generations ago.) Essentially, to digress from our conversation a bit, the quantum hologram is the discovery that Planck's black body radiation, discovered at the end of the 19th century, had led to quantum mechanics. But Planck's black body radiation, is that all matter emits radiation and photons; what the quantum hologram that Schempp discovered was, radiation is quantum coherent, entangled, and carries the information about the physical object.

Larry So you're talking about an aura?

EM Aura is a part of it. Let me go further. The quantum hologram, although the ancients did not know how to describe it, they did describe auras. And they describe the Akashic record: the Akashic record was the history of everything; but they didn't know how it happened. The quantum hologram is how it happens. It is the mechanism that says all of the emissions from every physical object are coherent, entangled in the zero-point energy field, and carry the information that psychics pick out.

Larry Retrieve.

EM I'll go out on a limb a little bit. It could very well be that that information is what all mediums pick up and say they're doing discarnate communication. They're picking up the information from that individual and interpreting it as though they were alive.

Larry Oh, I see.

EM In other words, this is a bit farfetched, maybe. We haven't proved it. But if this information is available to sensitive psychic people, then essentially what they are downloading into themselves - to use a computer analogy, you download an operating system to a computer and you can do all these good things with it. If you download the quantum hologram from a particular individual, the person can act like and think like that individual. It may very well be. I'm not saying it is. It may very well be an alternative explanation to reincarnation.

Larry So would you liken it to radio or TV waves?

EM In a sense.

Larry I understand it continues to go out into space. If you could get ahead of it, you could retrieve it.

EM But if it's nonlocal, and this is nonlocal, we're just [?] quantum mechanic. The real problem we have, Larry, at this point in science, is the disparity between Einstein's general relativity and the nonlocality of quantum mechanics. The quantum hologram is a nonlocal information structure, and we don't know how to fit that in well with general relativity.

Larry So this theory was discovered after John had died. Would he have been aware of it?

EM Yes, he died when?

Larry '91.

EM This was after.

Larry Because this would have interested him so much.

EM I knew it would.

Larry We have this theory that what got him interested into the esoteric idea was, he'd spent his life with invisible waves and so it wasn't a big jump to into these other things. Did he ever talk to you about that?

EM We talked about it. We were on the frontier of what we knew at the time, but did not have this physical knowledge, the physical knowledge of quantum. When I first started looking at it, I knew that consciousness was tied into the nonlocality of quantum mechanics. There wasn't any doubt about that. It was only when Schempp discovered the quantum hologram that I knew a major breakthrough had been found. But I knew from the very beginning, even when I was talking to John, I knew that quantum mechanics were very involved with our concepts of consciousness. But we did not have the mechanism, and the quantum hologram turns out to be the mechanism.

Larry John, of course, was very interested in UFOs. How does that fit in?

EM Well, I don't know. I can't tell you how that fits in, because I don't know, but my postulate is that much of the ancient law codified in religion is due to UFO visitation, due to aliens who have been coming here for a hell of a long time.

Larry Did John ever talk to you about that?

EM We did not talk about that at that time.

Larry Because I don't know if you know it, but he would have liked to have been taken up.

EM So would I.

Larry Would you? Yeah, it'd be an experience, wouldn't it?

EM I'd like to try that one, too.

Larry So he didn't talk to you about - Did he talk to you about reincarnation?

EM I think at that point yes, we talked a little bit about it.

Larry Do you know that he felt that he had been reincarnated many times and that there was a group of people that had been reincarnated together with him?

EM Well, I didn't know. We did not talk about that.

Larry Okay. I just wondered if he thought you were one of those people.

EM I don't know. We did not talk about that. However, I've talked with quite a few other people about all of this and was very much locked into, or believed in, the concept of reincarnation, until the quantum hologram came along and I said, Oh, my God, this may be—

Larry An explanation.

EM An explanation for it. Because this is the catch. The consciousness that we experience, if I understand correctly what we're doing (and I think I do), starting with Backster's work with plants, as we come up the chain of life and bring knowledge and awareness and it becomes more molecularly complex, then the complexity of consciousness becomes more complex. Just the plants, we know from Backster's work, respond to what's happening to other plants, the emotion of it, positive and negative threat or—

Larry Did he write that book, *The Secret Life of Plants*?

EM Well, I don't know if he wrote it.

Larry That's what you're talking about.

EM But that's what I'm talking about. First of all, let's start with quantum correlation of particles. The definition of quantum correlation: If particles are in connection with each other and they go apart from each other, then quantum mechanics says they're nonlocally interconnected thereafter, until they interact with something else and then they're all interacting. Well, quantum correlation of particles is a consciousness mechanism. In other words, the scientists, even though they wouldn't acknowledge interaction of consciousness for most of the 20th century, they have used the words that, if particles interact and go apart from each other, they "know" what's happening to the other one. They're using the word of awareness for nonlocal particles.

Let's carry that on and simply say that, if the molecular complexity increases as animal life increases because they're more complex, animals with a brain, first of all, distinguish self from the other; and as we go up the levels of complexity, thinking starts to happen. We can think about our thinking, and think about our thinking about our thinking, and thinking about our thinking about our thinking about our thinking. In other words, there are levels of complexity which go with the levels of nature. That seems to be what consciousness is all about. It's not just rooted in the brain. The brain is a portion of it, but it starts with nonlocal correlation of particles.

Larry Then does this fit in with the idea of the inner voice?

EM Yes, of course.

Larry That maybe there are things that we can just develop that are within us, if we trust ourselves, like an instinct?

EM Yes. That comes out of most of the oriental traditions, the ancient traditions of interaction of species and interaction of ourselves.

Larry Now, John, as you know, was a very astute businessman and he could grasp people and understand them; but Judy Skutch Whitson thought that he didn't trust his inner voice enough. He had it, but he didn't quite trust it.

EM I think that's correct. John was kind of like me. He wanted to know the answers, but he didn't trust it when it came to him.

Larry Yes. I think eventually he—

EM —achieved details of that.

Larry He kept looking.

EM He didn't know how to validate the details, and that's the real problem with all scientists, is finding evidence to support this hunch, if you will.

Larry And more than a hunch, because you can witness it.

EM You want to be able to do it under controlled conditions; and if you do it under controlled conditions, then you can call that science.

Larry He believed in crystal power.

EM Yes.

Larry And the power of pyramids. Did he ever talk about that?

EM Well, we talked a little bit about it. What were we talking about here? In retrospect, is the quantum hologram carrying information? We just didn't know it at that time.

Larry Did he ever bring out that little pendulum that he had?

EM Oh, I think we played with pendulums.

Larry He would ask it questions, suspended by a string.

EM Oh, yes, yes.

Larry He brought that out?

EM Oh, yes.

Larry He was into Sylva Mind Control.

EM Yes, I know.

Larry You know about that.

EM I knew Jose, and we still communicate, not recently.

Larry Did you know any of the people that were at this Monday night group that John had? Did you ever go to that? (Ed Note: the Monday Night group was ten years later than the period in which John primarily associated with Mitchell.)

EM I don't believe so.

Larry It was a group of people that would meet on Monday nights and discuss things like this.

EM No, I don't recall that.

Larry Sister Elizabeth Reis was one, a nun.

EM I guess. I never heard.

Larry She taught Sylva. You knew her?

EM No.

Larry And Mike Gergely? He was one of John's lawyers.

EM Mike what?

Larry Gergely.

EM It kind of rings a bell, but I can't pull it back now.

Larry Then you probably knew Bruce Fetzer.

EM I've met Bruce a few times. I didn't really know him, but I met him.

Larry It was an interesting group and it finally broke up. You were telling me there was a wedge between you and John, ultimately, over the fact that you wouldn't do work with consciousness surviving death.

EM I didn't want it to be a wedge. I just merely said to John, I don't know how to do it.

Larry And that displeased him.

EM That displeased him. He seemed to go distant from me at that point.

Larry And when was that approximately?

EM That had to be somewhere about 1981 or '82, something like that.

Larry So that was after he had resigned from the board of Noetics, right?

EM I can't remember whether he resigned, or he just quit coming. I don't know that we had a formal resignation from him, but did he move to Arizona?

Larry He had a place out in Arizona, yes.

EM I know when he was in Arizona, he quit coming to board meetings. However, you're well aware that our people in Noetics continue to interact.

Larry Oh yes, you have some of the same people.

EM The same people.

Larry And Lou Leeburg.

EM Wink Franklin, Judy, all. Anyway, John was pissed at me because I didn't know how to do what he wanted about studying survival of consciousness.

Larry Let me throw this out just as a thought. He got involved in your organization, Noetics, and absorbed some of what you were doing, and thought maybe he could do it himself rather than be part.

EM Could be.

Larry He did the same thing with baseball. He didn't like to have a board where he wasn't in charge.

EM I think that's probably—

Larry Do you think that's a possibility?

EM That sounds pretty right. You've touched on something. It's a sore spot, because I did not understand. John seemed to grow distant immediately, shortly after he'd asked me to look at the survival of consciousness; I simply said, John, I don't know how. We've got to find out what consciousness is first. And he did not like that.

Larry He was trying to put his own agenda into—

EM I would've been glad to, had I known how. I didn't know how to do what he wanted to do.

Larry Yes, that makes sense.

EM But, unfortunately, we still don't know how.

Larry But you haven't given up.

EM Still working on it.

Larry Yes, the Fetzer Institute and IONS were quite close.

EM Yes, it appears that in the later years, Judy and Wink and all the others he was glad to work with, Bruce and John later on. But I was kind of a bastard stepchild at that point.

Larry Well, are you not still very involved in IONS?

EM I'm very much involved, and I had been all along; but in John's eyes, it appeared to me - now I could be wrong - but I was persona non-grata with John.

Larry Because he couldn't control you?

EM That may be, or because I couldn't do what he wanted me to do.

Larry That's interesting. It's too bad that human nature—

EM I was very interested. I was pleased that he continued to provide funds for us, and that Judy and Wink and I think even Willis Harman had access to John; but somehow or another, the communication between John and I, just a wall kind of descended.

Larry That's too bad. So you don't have much to do with the Institute then anymore.

EM Well, I have a lot to do with the Institute. (Ed. Note: Massie meant the Fetzer Institute; Mitchell means the Institute of Noetic Science). I go to board meetings three times a year. We're on the phone and board phone meetings probably once every couple of weeks or so.

Larry With Rob and people like that?

EM At Fetzer [Institute]?

Larry Yes.

EM I don't know how much Marilyn, Marilyn, of course, is president of Noetics now.

Larry Lou Leeburg is—

EM Lou Leeburg, yes. I'm very close to Lou, so Lou is really our main contact on the board, contact with Fetzer.

Larry Have you read that new book by Dan Brown?

EM Dan Brown?

Larry Yes.

EM You mean—

Larry The one with the Masonic—

EM Yes.

Larry There's one theory that John Fetzer is a character in that book, and Marilyn is, too.

EM Well, Marilyn is clearly in the book.

Larry Is she?

EM Yes, I've got it right here. I didn't find the character that was John.

Larry The guy that got his hand cut off.

EM I don't remember that.

Larry Remember there was a hand that appeared and they're trying to figure out—

EM I didn't follow that very good. No, but we all read the book.

Larry I got a hold of it and had to read it just to see. Well, you've had a fascinating life.

EM Yes, I've had a good life. I'm finding it - as you've seen in this conversation, my memory acts like now I'm DSL.

Larry I'd say it's pretty good. You're holding your own.

EM But if all these memories – if I can't pull a name up, it'll pop in about the time you walk out the door. I may call you.

Larry I'm the same way, you know. Then you're relieved to remember that. It'll come in the middle of a sentence sometimes.

Can you think of anything more that you'd like to say about your relationship with John?

EM Well, I enjoyed the relationship with John. I was really troubled when he seemed essentially to put a wall between us after that comment of mine. I was pleased that Marilyn and Lou were on our board. Who else did we say?

Larry That was on your board? Oh, Judy?

EM Well, Judy. Before Marilyn, the guy. I'm blocking out his name right now.

Larry Before Marilyn? Let's see. Affiliated with the Fetzer Institute?

EM Yes, that was up there. I've said his name a half dozen times in the last hour.

Larry I'm trying to think of who.

EM Wink Franklin.

Larry Oh yes, Wink, who worked with Rob Lehman. There was a relationship there. He died suddenly.

EM Yes. What I was trying to say was, I was glad that they maintained the communication with Fetzer, but I was quite disappointed that I simply wasn't invited to participate in it.

Larry That must've hurt.

EM It did. But as long as they were working with Noetics and working together, the relationship was there, I wouldn't—

Larry You have a campus out in California, don't you?

EM Oh, yes. We have now moved the headquarters off that campus into Petaluma itself, to an office building; we turned the campus into a conference center, its profit-making arm.

Larry You've got to have that.

EM We have that, using it primarily as a profit, as an income producer; and having the office in Petaluma, just office space, research space, a research lab and everything, but using that as their headquarters. In other words, it's a division. The campus is a division of Noetics that's really a conference center.

Larry Do you have a laboratory where you actually [?] John was very interested in that.

EM Dean Radin runs the laboratory. Well, before Dean was Marilyn, of course. We have a couple of scientists over there. But Brendan O'Regan was our scientist, and Willis Harman in the early days. Then when we lost Willis, Marilyn took over and Willis Harman was chairman; when he passed, Wink came and took over.

Larry When they first had the Institute building there in Kalamazoo, there was a laboratory, and there was a guy by the name of Srinivasan.

EM I remember the name.

Larry He was doing experiments with physical things, trying to reach another plane.

EM I'd never met him when we were there.

Larry Is that something that you would continue to do? I mean, your organization.

EM My organization and my Quantrek organization. Mostly I'm still looking for funding. I think I've got funding coming, but primary at the moment, we don't have a laboratory in Quantrek. People working in it will be doing it on a project basis. Probably most of them are university associates doing it in their universities.

Larry That's a good move, isn't it, to get universities and more respected people involved in this.

EM Well, it's only in recent years that consciousness has become accepted in universities as a proper subject to study.

Larry Yeah. There was biofeedback as part of that. Did you know Dr. Richard Williams in Kalamazoo?

EM I think I met him somewhere along the line.

Larry He was very much on the ground floor of that mind-body biofeedback.

EM I met him at some point down the line.

Larry He worked with John. Well, I don't want to take up your whole day here.

EM This is delightful talking to you, telling you part of what went on there. And yes, my certain amount of disappointment that John distanced himself. I really enjoyed working with him.

Larry Well, I'll see if I can find out. He's been gone for 20 years now. It's too bad we couldn't talk to him.

EM I think we had a lot more interaction with the (Fetzer) Foundation after his passing, with Judy and Wink and Willis; because for some reason he seemed to be thoroughly ticked at me. As far as I know, the only thing I said to him was, John, I don't know how to do what you're asking me to do yet. Maybe we will.

Larry Which was a valid response.

EM I didn't know how to do what he wanted. And we still don't. We've got experimenters at the University of Arizona, Stuart Hameroff, and Roger England, I'm blocking on his name, too, been working on consciousness studies and brain consciousness studies and remote viewing and those sorts of subject matters—it's certainly in European universities. It's more prevalent than in the US universities, but we're getting there.

Larry Well, Europeans are not as fundamentally religious as Americans.

EM I think that's probably—

Larry That probably could be part of it.

EM That could be part of it. And particularly our so-called Tea Party people that have kind of gone on overboard.

Larry I call them tea baggers.

EM It's very frightening to me, concerning to me.

Larry Oh, yes.

EM I don't consider too many of those people very bright people either.

Larry Oh, no, they're not. I'm going to turn this off.